

## **R1 Citizens' Advisory Committee Meeting**

**December 9, 2014 – 6:00 pm**

**FWP HQ Kalispell**

FWP Staff: Comm. Gary Wolfe, Paul Sihler, Jim Williams, John Fraley, Alan Wood, Dave Landstrom, Mark Deleray, Lee Anderson, Joel Tohtz, Kristy Personett

Legislators: Rep. Keith Regier, Rep. Ed Lieser, Rep. Mark Noland, Rep. Albert Olszewski, Rep. Bob Brown, Rep. Albert Olszewski, Sen. Bob Keenan, Sen. Janna Taylor, Sen. Jennifer Fielder

CAC Members: Mike Robertson, Mike Corkish, Kari Gabriel, Chancy Jeschke, Daniel Short, Mike Rooney, Jay Sheffield, Larry Lack, Ron Hawkinson, Charles Abell

CAC Alumni: Tony Anderson, Brent Mitchell, Mike Shepard, Paul Fielder, Marshall Corbett

Public: Dan Olson, Jim Vashro

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Jim Williams: opened meeting, made introductions; “we work for you, and this is your building and agency.”

John Fraley: (meeting facilitator) “great turn out”, reviewed agenda.

Commissioner Gary Wolfe:

-Personal introduction and explanation of role as Commissioner (liaison);

- Public input very important
- Not a “rubber stamp” Board
- Good mix of members on Commission
- Pays attention to constituents, weighs issues
- Believes in FWP staff
- Values input from CAC members; likes to have them review issues prior to Commission review

-Reminder that 2015 is the next year for the fishing regulations 4 year review process to start.

-Thank you to CAC members and Legislators for their involvement; it’s appreciated.

*Sen. Janna Taylor: (clarification) there is a bill to raise fines for poaching in the works for 2015.*

*Mike Shepard: How is FWP going to sell non-resident tags?*

Deputy Director Paul Sihler:

-Personal introduction, viewed “Choices for the Future” video

-Presented power point regarding Fish and Wildlife funding issue; will work with Legislature and governor for solutions. Explained where we’re at, why, and options to rectify the budget issues. Handed out brochure (refer to this for details).

*Rep. Frank Garner: Is FWP required to have a reserve fund?*

FWP cannot submit a budget to the Legislature which is not balanced.

*Rep. Albert Olszewski: FWP basing funding models on assumption that sell of licenses will not decrease.*

FWP does anticipate some buyers resistance if fees are increased.

*Rep. Albert Olszewski: suggestion to decrease non-resident prices.*

Price can only be reduced by Legislative process. FWP is waiting to see how Idaho’s decrease works.

*Sen. Janna Taylor: Other states license prices? This information will be imperative for her in decision making. She says changing "earmarked" funds is difficult to get because of her constituents and what they have wanted.*

-2015 Legislation handout pertinent to FWP discussion

*Dan Short: clarify budget/revenue.*

FWP receives federal funds we use and are reimbursed (for eligible expenditures). We have no "match" now. Firearms PR funds have increased, fishing equipment DJ funds has decreased.

#### Legislators -

Sen. Jennifer Fielder: Served on EQC committee (?)

- Natural resource issues are important to her
- Bighorn sheep on Hwy. 200 issue is dangerous for wildlife and people
- Walleye – constituents want them in Noxon; use anglers for creel surveys
- State lands – increase access, health, productivity. Is working on the transfer of Federal lands to the State. Invited all to a debate at FVCC on Thursday; handed out flyer.

Rep. Bob Brown:

- Local concern about fee increases
- Access to public land – why are roads posted? We need better opportunity

Rep. Mark Noland:

- Access denial is an issue (ie. Swan Lake)
- Has his ears open
- Keep fishing/hunting accessible and affordable

Rep. Frank Garner:

- Access is important
- Good sportsmanship – provide incentives
- Concerned about fee increase; wants to listen to all arguments

Sen. Bob Keenan:

- Fee increase is not an easy battle. Follow the trail (Governor, FWP Director to EQC), why is EQC sponsoring the bill
- Access issue – locking public land but pushing for access through private land (ie. Bridge in Bigfork)
- Kudos to Dave Landstrom, Mark Deleray and Lee Anderson; "they are super individuals"

Sen. Janna Taylor:

- Feels the same as Bob Keenan
- Kudos to Dave Landstrom

Rep. Ed Lieser:

- Access and habitat, try to strike a balance; legislators have to evaluate every bill
- AIS is big issue; there is opportunity to improve. Constituents want this as a priority

Rep. Albert Olszewski

- Thank you!
- Backs FWP on education and safety
- Use the "Choices" video; very successful and effective

CAC members:

Jay Sheffield:

- Appreciate Commissioner Wolfe regarding “slob” hunters. FWP should applaud good actions.
- Supports fee increase/funding recommendations

Mike Corkish:

- MT is laughed at for our cheap license prices; he echoes support of increase
- Do we have hunter recruitment numbers?

*Paul Sihler –recruitment is less of an issue than retention*

Dan Short:

- With Trout Unlimited
- Montanans are passionate about recreation
- Funding issue – the 10 year cycle is crazy. Supports increase
- AIS – TU helps support Coram check station. Remediation would cost more
- Thank you to Jim Vashro for the “Bucket Biology” op ed in the paper

Charlie Abell:

- Fee increase – supports you play/you pay, efficiency (supports increase)
- DNRC land access during snowmobile season is an issue
- Concerned about what we’re leaving future generations

Chancy Jeschke:

- Walleye – strong support for presence in Noxon and here
- FWP will hear complaints if license fee increase goes through; he does
- Non-resident kid fishing prices/ages inquiry
- Idaho has fee for extra rod, MT could use it – “rod stamp”
- Access is huge issue. Flathead County has 10 acres on Stillwater River possibly available

Mike Robertson:

- Clarify \$8 increase

*Paul Sihler – creates a base hunting license fee of \$8 paid once*

Mike Rooney:

- Access! Likes knowing Legislators are concerned
- 2 permits drawn by 1 hunter (moose & goat same year) – doesn’t understand why that happens
- Fee increase – perfect. People believe we get a good deal
- Kudos to Libby crew & cooperators on the Kootenai River work

Ron Hawkinson:

- Appreciate Legislators, they will be hearing from him.
- Concerns about HD 122 mule deer. Wants FWP to explore limited entry options
- Fee increase – we get bang for our buck and are happy with it
- Access – he likes gated roads, wildlife need security, good hunting behind gates
- The Chippy Creek burn in the Thompson River country is providing great mule deer habitat. But he feels that biologists should consider some protection of young mule deer bucks so they can reach an older age....(comments given after meeting)

Kari Gabriel:

- Has a different perspective, doesn't hunt or fish
- Fee increase wouldn't be a big deal. She wouldn't bother her to pay a "usage" fee

Larry Lack:

- Fee increase is "nothing" – MT has the longest seasons and best hunting with the cheapest licenses in the west
- AIS – on milfoil task force, funding is difficult, need permanent/consistent funding

Others:

Mike Shepard:

- Access – likes gated roads. Hunting pressure, no logging/no food

Brent Mitchell:

- Fee increase - \$11 right now is easy
- Access – best hunting behind gate (lots of gates/berms breached by "slob" hunters)
- Buying land – they don't make it anymore. Concerned about what else happens to land that FWP doesn't acquire

Tony Anderson:

- Increase should be incremental
- FWP gets the blame, but should be Legislature

Marshall Corbett:

- Nothing's changed since he was a member 10 years ago (issues)
- FWP is a great group

Paul Fielder:

- Access to federal lands does not need to be 365 days per year; multi-use and options and seasonal closures

Commissioner Wolfe:

- Access – legal access/route of access. FWP has been purchasing public access easements the Commission has approved.

Deputy Director Sihler:

- Discussed a handout regarding 2015 legislation regarding FWP

Jim Williams wrapped up the meeting; FWP will be working on public relationships and agency image.

Thank you to Legislators and CAC members for serving, for their time. We are here to serve you at your request.

Next CAC meeting – late January, TBT

(Summary compiled by Kristy Personett)